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3. National Intelligence Estimate 85-2-62, "The Situation and Prospects in Cuba," 1 August 1962 (Excerpt)

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE

NUMBER 85-2-62

**The Situation and Prospects in Cuba**

1 August 1962

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## THE SITUATION AND PROSPECTS IN CUBA<sup>1</sup>

### THE PROBLEM

To analyze the situation in Cuba and to estimate the prospects over the next year or so, with particular reference to Castro's relations with the Communists and to the potential for resistance to his regime.

### CONCLUSIONS

A. Fidel Castro has asserted his primacy in Cuban communism; the "old" Communists have had to accommodate themselves to this fact, as has the USSR. Further strains may develop in these relationships, but they are unlikely to break the ties of mutual interest between Castro and the "old" Communists and between Cuba and the USSR. (Paras. 1-10)

B. By force of circumstances, the USSR is becoming ever more deeply committed to preserve and strengthen the Castro regime. The USSR, however, has avoided any formal commitment to protect and defend the regime in all contingencies. (Para. 11)

C. The Cuban armed forces are loyal to the personal leadership of the Castro brothers. Their capabilities have been and are being greatly enhanced by the Soviet Bloc's provision of military equipment and instruction. Cuban military capabilities, however, are essentially defensive. We believe it unlikely that the Bloc will provide Cuba with the capability to undertake major independent military operations

<sup>1</sup> This estimate is designed to bring up-to-date NIE 85-82, "The Situation and Prospects in Cuba," dated 21 March 1962. The background information contained in that document remains generally valid.

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overseas. We also believe it unlikely that the Bloc will station in Cuba Bloc combat units of any description, at least for the period of this estimate. (Paras. 12-29)

D. The Cuban armed forces are well able to intimidate the general population and to suppress any popular insurrection likely to develop in present circumstances. They are probably capable of containing and controlling any threat to the regime through guerrilla action and of repelling any invasion short of a direct US military intervention in strength. (Paras. 22-23)

E. The Cuban economy is in deep trouble, in part because of the US embargo and a consequent shortage of convertible foreign exchange, in part because of agricultural and industrial mismanagement. Despite remedial measures, it is unlikely that agricultural and industrial production can be significantly increased within the next year or so. The expected increase in capital imports from the Bloc is unlikely to produce a net growth of the economy before the end of 1963. (Paras. 30-35)

F. The Castro regime retains the positive support of about 20 percent of the population, but disaffection is increasing. This trend is manifested in growing passive resistance and in occasional open demonstrations of resentment. Few, however, dare to accept the risks of organized active resistance in present circumstances, for fear of the regime's massive apparatus for surveillance and repression. (Paras. 36-41)

G. If arms and supplies became available and if confidence were created in the likelihood of outside support for a major Cuban uprising, resistance activity and potential would increase. Even so it is unlikely that the regime could be overthrown unless events had already shaken the regime and brought into doubt its capacity for survival, and unless substantial outside support for the insurgents were forthcoming. (Paras. 42-51)

H. The Castro regime still seeks to lead the "inevitable" revolution throughout Latin America, but its preoccupation with domestic problems tends to limit its activity in this

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respect. In Latin America there is widespread disillusionment regarding the Cuban revolution. Nevertheless, militant pro-Castro groups exist in several countries, and Cuban subversive activity could prove effective in certain unstable situations: e.g., in Guatemala or Venezuela. The appeal of the Cuban example will increase in Latin America if reform lags there and hopes and promises remain unfulfilled. (Paras. 52-59)

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